

Number 2

It is said the agent in England, of Washington College, Virginia—the same that Gen. Lee presides over—reports donations to the amount of £60,000; the agent in France reports that he is doing very well, but gives no particulars, and the agent along the Mis-sissippi river reports \$50,000, which is to be largely increased when the cotton crop is sold. All this, in addition to \$190,000, is now in hand.—[Lexington Gazette.]

Free Christian Commonwealth

Rev. STUART ROBINSON, Editor.
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Mr. McMaster's Rejoinder to the Presbyterian Platform for private members.

We make room for the larger portion of Mr. McMaster's rejoinder to our article a few weeks since in correction of his charge against Dr. Dabney and ourselves, not simply because of his gentlemanly courtesy and candor, but because also the subject is one about which the public at large, as well as Mr. McMaster, seems to be ill informed. As the best method of accommodating the discussion to our very limited space, we present first the chief part of his article and then some brief notes upon it.

"The Rev. Stuart Robinson, D. D., well known as a Presbyterian clergyman, and, at present, editor of the *Free Christian Commonwealth*, of Louisville, replies to the remarks we lately made on his review of Dabney's life of Stonewall Jackson. The exceeding courtesy and gentleness of Dr. Stuart's reply to our disclaimer is, we did not expect these, and, certainly, it will not do for a Catholic to be surprised in many a clergyman's Presbyterianism. We feel sure, if Dr. Stuart treats the unworthy person of the *Free Christian Commonwealth* so gently, and so generously, he would never say another bitter word against 'Popery,' if he would only study the authoritative doctrinal formularies of the Catholic Church one half as thoroughly as we have studied the foundations of Presbyterianism."

Our comment was on the omission of a remarkable passage in Mr. Dabney's account of how Stonewall Jackson became a Presbyterian. We asked Dr. Robinson, very pointedly, how he could leave out so significant an explanation, contained in the omitted portion of the confession of the Shenandoah, did, with qualifications, adopt Presbyterianism—how he became a Presbyterian while rejecting the fundamental dogmas of Calvinism—justification by faith only, and that men were "elected to eternal salvation without any regard to their good works." Dr. Robinson answers us that, for the bulk of his Presbyterian readers, it is well known that "private members of the Presbyterian Church are not required to accept the Confession of Faith," and that the passage was omitted simply for the sake of brevity.

We accept the explanation—coming from a gallant and fearless gentleman. We regret the sharpness of our manner in asking why the passage was suppressed. It did not seem to us, though, Dr. Robinson considered the concession to Stonewall Jackson as disavowing, and, when, frankly, and with apology, withdrew that suggestion, and everything else that can be construed into any want, on our part, of a sincere and great respect for Dr. Stuart Robinson personally.

Dr. Robinson is misinformed in regard to our having been educated in the sect known as "Seceders." On the contrary, we were trained in the "old, genuine, original" of Presbyterianism. Our training was in the fierce school of Calvin, Bona, and Turretin, of Knox and McTear, and from that Presbyterianism, and last and weakest of all, the *American Presbyterians*. It is a little singular that, in another editorial article in this same number of Dr. Robinson's *Free Christian Commonwealth*, we have a corroboration of our charge that *American Presbyterianism* was the weakest of all the seceders from original Presbyterianism.

In the tender years of childhood—at an age when few children bother their heads with such grave matters, it was our delight, and our recreation, to puzzle out these questions and vexations, and, very dear to us, before 1834, when we were a very young boy, left this *ancient Presbyterianism* for the (excuse us Dr. Robinson!) *shoddy American Presbyterianism*. At that young age, with it, is certain, very rare advantage, to parents, of a wonderful personal virtues, and of very high cultivation—we took the point of departure that ended in making us a Roman Catholic. We resolved to read back and find the origin of what was inculcated on us for truth. We were pointed to Calvin, and Bona, and Turretin. We read them, and they pointed us to the Catholic Church, from which they had seceded!

But this is much more of the personal than we ever, at any time, intended to have written of ourself. It is, at once, too much, and too long, to tell you. It is enough for us to have said to Dr. Robinson that he is mistaken in thinking we were bred in the "narrow and fierce schools of the genus Presbyterianism, called * * * seceders." We were bred in the first of all Presbyterian creeds, in that which, in 1647, the "General Assembly" at Edinburgh approved the "Westminster Confession of Faith," framed in preceding years. In that which approved "the larger and shorter catechisms"—all of which we know how to recite to this day. Also, the "Shorter Catechism" (significantly) were early taught, and still believe, by various political orders, at various times, from 1580 to 1661. Also "the Solemn League and Covenant," entered into by the three kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland, ratified and renewed "with an acknowledgement of sins" against it, and all such sanctions, at various times, and by the pious Charles II., and all like godly folk.

These are the foundations of Presbyterianism. They are so familiar to us that we will freely write for Dr. Robinson's journal a series of papers, if he will permit us, giving a very true and thorough analysis of Presbyterianism—its origins, development and final decay. But he ought to retract the accusation that we were trained a *Seceder*. We are of the *old stock*. The oldest of all Presbyterian stocks, and, so soon as we found it was a seceder from the Church Christ established, with the promise "that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," we went and did our best to repair what our forefathers had badly done in seceding from it.

And now we ask a few words from Dr. Stuart Robinson, as a shining light in the Presbyterian firmament, in regard to the loose doctrine he holds as to church membership in his communion. He says "every Presbyterian has the right to receive members of the Presbyterian Church, are not required to subscribe to the Confession of Faith."

We will own that in appealing as we did to Dr. Stuart Robinson, besides the politeness of his writings, we were somewhat incited, from his very name, to suppose he held to the *old Scotch Presbyterianism*. Without the passage we have quoted from his paper, above, of the "leaving of Presbyterianism with the false doctrine of the *treacherous expediency policy*," &c., of Puritanism, we expected him to hold up the still standard of doctrinal uniformity.

It so happened, on the day Dr. Robinson's paper, from which we have quoted, was received, two highly educated gentlemen were together with us, in our sanctum. Both of them were *old* Presbyterians, and graduated at the Miami University, under the Presidency of Dr. E. D. McMaster. We cannot think it is to their intellectual disparagement that, regarding Calvinism, they are both almost in religious matters. But each of them is perfectly conversant with the formulas of the Presbyterian "Confession of Faith," and with the "Catechisms, Larger and Shorter."

They were both astounded at Dr. Robinson's declaration that a "private member of the Presbyterian Church was not required to accept the Confession of Faith." They thought otherwise. We yield gracefully to Dr. Robinson's better knowledge of this question. We know nothing about it; but it does seem strange to us that one can be received to the communion of a society, while denying fundamental dogmas of its faith! It looks, to us, like "the false doctrine, the treacherous expediency policy," &c., of New Englandism—as Dr. Stuart says in his last paper!

We must not close this article without drawing Dr. Robinson's attention to what is plainly, in terms of the schools, an *ignorantia elenchis*. He says, properly, that "uninstructed persons are not to be expected to post themselves, as a term of communion, in 'a system of Theology.' Opportunity is as follows: Can you admit, honestly, to your communion, a man who rejects a fundamental article of your belief? Catholics cannot! How can any other? He who offends in one point is guilty of all! No Catholic Priest can receive to Catholic communion a man that declares his disbelief in the spotless conception of the Mother of God, or in the value of prayers to the Saints, or in any other dogmas of Catholic Faith!"

How, then, is it possible for Presbyterians, if they profess to be the Church of Christ, to admit to communion a man denying the very fundamental doctrine of their Confession—eternally decreed damnation or salvation irrespective of works, or the omniscience of God, or the infallibility of Scripture? How, then, could he be received into the Presbyterian Church? We own we cannot understand it!

On the several points of this article we remark:

1. The simple issue raised with Mr. McMaster, was not whether Presbyterians are consistent or inconsistent, wise or unwise, in not requiring subscription to their doctrinal ecclesiastical and ritual symbols on the part of private members; but simply whether Dr. White in the first instance, had dealt honestly with Gen. Jackson and Dr. Dabney after him had truly expounded Presbyterian usage, and whether we, after Dr. D., had with a design to cover up a dishonesty, omitted this passage in citing from the biography. In reference to this—the original issue, Mr. McMaster like a true man makes to us personally, the *amende*. And we can assure Mr. McMaster that if he knew Dr. Dabney as well as we do, however much he might dislike his intense Protestantism, he would never have suggested the idea that Dr. Dabney would "shut out the whole counsel of God to serve a purpose. Mr. McMaster himself has not shown a more fearless, uncompromising spirit in maintaining either his political opinions or his theological views, than that which has distinguished Dr. Dabney through his whole public career. Nor had Mr. McMaster known the venerable Dr. White as we do would he ever, for a moment, have entertained the suspicion that Dr. White would widen the door of his church for the special purpose of admitting Gen. Jackson or any body else. Besides, at this time Gen. Jackson was unknown save as a brave Lieutenant, and a not very popular professor in a military school.

2. Now as to the fact that our Presbyterian churches in the United States do not require of private members adherence to the Confession of Faith, as do some other American sections of the Scotch Church; while all of them hold substantially the original Westminster symbols, Mr. McMaster need not rely upon the recollections of his friends of Miami University. A simple reference to two of the American modifications of the Scottish Directory for worship will settle that matter.

Says the General Assembly's Directory (Chap. I.) "Those who are to be admitted to sealing ordinances (that is to full communion in the Church) 'shall be examined as to their knowledge and piety.'"

"Children born within the pale of the visible church * * * are to be taught to read and repeat the Catechism, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. They are to be taught to pray, to abhor sin, to fear God and to obey the Lord Jesus Christ. And when they come to years of discretion, if they be free from scandal and appear sober and steady, and to have sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body, they ought to be informed it is their duty and their privilege to come to the Lord's Supper."

Of unbaptized persons it is said at the same place: "They shall after giving satisfaction with respect to their knowledge and piety make a public profession of their faith and thereupon be baptized."

Here now is the whole rule on the subject, under which Dr. White acted in the case of Gen. Jackson. The rule in the Book of the Associate Reformed Church, which we designated—by the popular title applied to them in our boyhood—as the "old seceders," (we meant to raise no question as to whether they are in fact a "secession" or a true succession of the ancient Scottish Church) principles—for, bating some of their erroneous semi-Theocratic notions, we judge

the secessions from the Church of Scotland to be the purer and more earnest of the two—the rule of this Directory, (Sec. 34) of the admission of members," declares:

"Applicants shall be examined concerning their knowledge, principles and experience, by the minister."

This is in substance the same with the rule of the General Assembly's Directory as above quoted. But the *Adopting act* of the Associate Reformed Synod at Greencastle, Pa., May 31st, 1799, declares further:

"Agreeably hereto, the terms on which any person or persons, shall be admitted as a member or members of this church, are, a profession of faith in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the perfect and only rule of faith and practice; together with an approbation of the Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, Forum of Church Government and Directories for worship as therein received; a holy life and conversation &c."

It was under this phase of Presbyterianism or some similar adopting order superinduced upon the Westminster Directory, that we supposed Mr. McMaster had been educated when we called him a "seceder." We need not retract therefore, as he requests, beyond explaining our use of the term as the popular designation of a very rigid sort of Presbyterians analogous to the term "Iron-sides" as applied to certain Baptists. Presbyterian bodies generally in this country accept the same "old original" Westminster symbols—modifying only the article of the Civil Magistrate.

3. It will be seen, moreover, on reference to Dabney's Life of Jackson, (page 81-85) that the question is not a question of receiving one who disbelieves and "rejects a fundamental article of belief."

The statement is that Gen. Jackson, had "difficultly with"—"objected to" the doctrine of God's sovereign purpose. That a friend said to him "jocularly" he ought to be a Methodist. That his extreme tenderness of conscience made him fear he had professed more than he believed &c.—No rejection; and the incident is mentioned only to set off more strongly Jackson's clear and full acceptance of the Calvinistic theory afterward. Dr. White was satisfied with "his knowledge and piety" notwithstanding his difficulties on that subject.

4. As to Mr. McMaster's suggestion of his qualifications to write for us articles on Presbyterianism, he will perceive that we are cramped into a very small space, with a great deal to put in on controversial subjects much nearer home to us. Should this effort of our poverty, to keep open a channel of utterance for the friends of civil and religious liberty, against the efforts of tyrannical radicalism to establish, at whatever cost an "exotic" here in Kentucky in the interest of despotism—should this ever result in our reaching the ample dimensions of the *Freeman's Journal*, we should take great pleasure in giving Mr. McMaster a place for such essays accompanied with free notes thereon by ourselves. A reference to our labors in the "Critic" twelve years ago, and an examination of our library—with an extensive Papal Library, embosomed in it—as a little *impurum in impurum*—would suggest to Mr. McMaster that perhaps we may have "studied the authoritative formulas of the Catholic Church" somewhat thoroughly. We are rustier perhaps, than when we had occasion to deal with the propositions of Dr. Brownson and Archbishop Hughes twelve years ago. For since we have a Presbyterian Pope set up in Philadelphia, we have been obliged to turn attention off from the old man at Rome.

But that the Calvinistic system of Theology and Church Government has been corrupted somewhat by the leaven of New Englandism does not in the least affect our faith in it. Had Mr. McMaster waited till maturer years had taught him how to be a *Bellesite*, and separate the true system from the errors which their circumstances led his forefathers, oppressed, persecuted, and enfolded by usurping tyrants and avaricious nobles, to mingle with their great truths, and from the corruptions with which their degenerate sons had permeated their system, we doubt not he would have today been found side by side with us in the great struggle for theological truth, as well as in the struggle for civil and religious liberty.

5. As to the chief objection of Mr. McMaster to our statement of the Presbyterian usage in receiving members, it has no force unless we assume the correctness of the Roman Catholic as against the Protestant Evangelical conception of Christian faith. His notion of faith is that of accepting dogmas, as an act of obedience to Church authority; our conception of faith is that of a simple trust in a personal Saviour. His theory of religion calls upon men to believe as set forth by the Church, our theory to believe a Christ as set forth in the Scriptures of God. On our view of the matter, while no one who positively rejects any teaching of the word of God is to be received in the Church, yet no difficulty about doctrine that does not prevent a man from accepting in his

heart the Lord Jesus Christ, and resting upon his righteousness alone for salvation, should be a bar to his entering into the communion of saints.

6. We have been deeply interested in Mr. McMaster's brief and modest statement of his personal religious history, of which we knew nothing before beyond the fact that he had been reared a Presbyterian of the strictest sect. We do not even now know precisely the degree of relationship between him and his distinguished namesake in the Presbyterian Church. When we say, however, that we have ever entertained the greatest respect for the Presbyterian Doctor McMaster, as a man of genius, a profound theologian, a bold, fearless, honest man, and a high gentleman—notwithstanding all his strange vagaries as an abolitionist, nobody who knows us will longer wonder, that we should be able to entertain a like respect for the New York kinsman as a man of fine genius, manly courage, true honor and high principle, in spite of the fact that he has fallen into the errors of Rome. We can only regret that so glorious a cause as that in which his forefathers suffered, should have lost the services of a son who has shown so much of their indomitable martyr spirit.

Presbyterial Joking.
The Presbyterial of Luzerne at its meeting, Sept. 17th-19th, "adopted with entire and cordial unanimity," the history says, the report of their committee on the minutes of the Assembly, containing the following:

"In so far as the deliverances of the General Assembly, complained of by the Louisville Presbyterial, are simply a declaration of the views of the Assembly on the rebellion and the war, they must stand with *whispering* brethren of different views may make."

"Resolved, That we are ready to join our voice with that of other Presbyteries of our Church, as one of the *swollen fountains of power*, to condemn the course of this faction, which now agitates the Church; and while we pray for the peace, purity, and unity of the Church, will rejoice to see the highest court of the Church ever exercise the authority given it by the constitution, to maintain that unity, by the 'suppressing of schismatical divisions,' and the excommunicating of those who are contumacious."

Of course the decision of such a Presbyterial that the deliverances of the Assembly must stand, settles the question with the Louisville pulpits, and ought to put an end to all fears about the Assembly on the part of its friends. But when it comes to the witty and withering sarcasm of such a body in applying the "so-called" prefix, when speaking of the Presbyterians as the "fountains of power," we might suppose that the grey hairs of the living heroes of the revolution of 1824-7, such as Drs. Geo. Junkin and Engles, and Hon. Samuel C. Anderson, must stand on end, and the bones of the dead heroes, such as Winchester and Dr. Green, must rattle in their coffins at the sharp twang of the satirical lash!

A still sadder specimen of Presbyterial joke, however, we find in the same journal from which we culled the foregoing. It is the report of the proceedings on the same subject, of our neighbors of the New Albany Presbyterial. That body reports as follows:

"Presbyterial having heard the report of its Commissioners, it is hereby 'Resolved, 1. That their diligence and fidelity be approved.
'Resolved, 2. That we cordially approve the action of the Assembly in regard to the signing of the Declaration and Testimony,' and express our earnest desire that the position taken be maintained.
'Resolved, 3. That we sympathize with those brethren who are struggling to maintain the Church in its integrity against those who would have it yield rebellion to its authority and discipline.
'Resolved, 4. That in approving the action of the Assembly, the inference is clear that our ministers and churches can have no official intercourse with them.

"The next stated meeting will be at Utica, Indiana, April 17th, 1867, at seven o'clock, P. M. J. P. Safford, S. C."

Now, at the risk of being thought very reckless in making light of so terrible an infraction as being cut off from official intercourse with the metropolitans Churches and bishops of New Albany, Jeffersonville, Owen Creek, Greencastle, Henryville, &c., we cannot repress a smile at such a joke as excommunication from "official intercourse" with the distinguished Commissioner to the Assembly whose name is signed to this report, as stated clerk, and who doubtless was the *magna pars* in the issuing of this great bill of excommunication. For we have a very distinct recollection of hearing some friends at St. Louis making catalogue of the remarkable number of bankrupts, ecclesiastical and moral, who figured, or made desperate efforts to figure, as the prominent men of the Radical movement there; and quite conspicuously in the list, figured the New Albany Doctor, though the extemporized "mercantile agency's" report was not more recent than the date of the transfer of the great light from Piqua, Ohio, to New Albany. But these are the days of shoddy regulations, as well as of shoddy fortunes of remarkably rapid growth. And quietly submitting to the fortunes of war, no doubt our good friends and neighbors, Wilson, Hill, McPheters, McCown, &c., will, like ourselves, bear with the spirit of martyrs, the sad reverse of having to stand with the snobs in the little suburban village of Louisville, and see with many a loving desire, our distinguished

neighbors, McKee, McMillan. Young and Valentine, passing up to the Metropolitan Seas of New Albany, Jeffersonville, Owen Creek, Henryville, to receive the sympathizing *patting*, the patronizing smiles, and the high honors "of official intercourse" with Dr. Safford & Co. Our favored rivals have only now to "mind their steps"—"hold up your head, speak loud and plain"—as our Webster's spelling book used so kindly to hint to us, and Dr. Safford and his Presbyterial will make men of them yet!

It was very kind and considerate in the great man to give us the benefit of his superior logical power, and point out to us "the clear inference" from his premise, and thereby save us the mortification, perhaps, of being snubbed in the blind eagerness of our desire to rush into "official intercourse" with the dignitaries of New Albany, Owen Creek, &c. We shall endeavor to show our appreciation of this kindness, by struggling against the natural desire for distinction, and remaining quietly within our little suburban village of Louisville.

Light Shining in the Darkness.

A "Minority man" in the Presbyterial of Oct. 6th professes to show that the doctrine advanced by the minority of the last Assembly was distinctly recognized in the New School controversy by the Old School party. The writer seems to be one of the older men who can testify from memory of facts in which he bore a part. He has evidently not been a reader of the *Free Christian Commonwealth*, for it will be perceived that he repeats chiefly what has been said in our columns. But his argument is forcibly put and will interest our readers as an independent witness in confirmation of what we have said on the subject. We copy his first essay nearly entire:

"Major Editors: If the greatness of a task may be inferred from the efforts put forth to accomplish it, the sponsors of the late General Assembly have found themselves engaged in a work of considerable difficulty. Not to look beyond the Presbyterial you have, I think, some four or five correspondents, each of whom has occupied four or five columns in attempting to establish the *consolidation* theory of our system. Every week we are treated to elaborate arguments, resting, for the most part, upon foreign authorities, designed to show that our General Assembly is invested with the plenary power of the Church, and may, at its own discretion, exercise any and all the functions of the inferior judicatories. These dissertations are not unfrequently garnished with sharp censures upon the minority of the last Assembly, and those who concur with them in sentiment, as men who have repudiated the settled doctrine of the Church, and 'adopted the identical views maintained by the New School party in our controversy with them.' The *Princeton Review*, while justifying the minority in their course, by declaring that the acts of the Assembly were 'unlawful, for 'unfettered secession,' 'adapted to foment strife and division,' and 'to put in jeopardy important interests,' affirms the above theory with a confidence which would seem to justify all dissent. With those who do not examine for themselves, these voluminous and plausible authorities will no doubt be conclusive. But, happily, there are men living who can remember the time when this doctrine met with no favour in our communion, and who are now, in a most disinterested manner, to stand by without remonstrance, and see it incorporated with our polity. The danger of this has become imminent, by reason of the sanction given to the theory in question by the last Assembly. The authors of the report may be due to the formal deliverances of our Supreme Judiciary, no one will deny that like other Synods and Councils, the Assembly may err, and often has erred. Nor will there be any dissent from the two propositions, (1.) That 'an unconstitutional act is one which is not in accordance with the will of the Church,' and (2.) That it is the right and duty of our ministers and people to use all proper means to bring about a repeal of such acts of our judicatories as they believe to be unwise and oppressive, even though they may not challenge their constitutionality.

The issues, then, before the Church, are these:—(1.) Were the acts of the late General Assembly warranted by the Constitution? And (2.) Were they wise and just, and suited to the condition of the Church, as both issues, the majority of the Assembly affirmed, and the minority denied. The *Princeton Review* affirms as to the first, and denies as to the second. Very few of the newspaper writers on the side of the majority, capable in applying their principles to the real difficulties involved in the proceedings at St. Louis, as will be clearly shown before this discussion is completed. Had they even succeeded in proving the constitutionality of those proceedings, the still harder task would remain of vindicating their wisdom and equity.

The argument of the *Repository* and other writers is this: All church power is derived from the Lord Jesus Christ, and resides in the whole body of believers. Therefore, inasmuch as the several judicatories are representative bodies, they are clothed with the same power which pertains to their respective constituent churches. The session has all the power of the congregation, and the General Assembly all the power which inheres in the entire Church. We admit the premises, and deny the conclusion. Whether the General Assembly of any particular denomination is invested with the plenary power of the denomination, and can exercise all the functions of the inferior courts, depends altogether upon the Constitution the Church may have adopted. Take an analogous case. All political power is derived from the Lord Jesus Christ, and resides in the body of the people. Does it follow that the Legislature of a State may assume all the powers and functions of the several municipal and private corporations within its territorial area? And especially under a government like ours, can the national Legislature do whatever the State, county, and city authorities may do? The government might have been organized upon this principle, but it was not. Neither was our Church organized upon this principle. In both cases the Constitutions actually adopted provide for a certain distribution of these various powers and duties, and these Constitutions are as binding upon the supreme as upon the subordinate legislatures. This will be made clear to demonstration, when it is considered that the Presbyteries might now abide indefinitely the powers of the General Assembly. This has been

repeatedly proposed by some of the wisest men of the Church. These changes might include prohibitory clauses, forbidding the General Assembly to exercise certain of the powers it now has. Would such a Constitution be invalid? And if not, what becomes of the theory that to the General Assembly belong *ex necessitate rei*, all the prerogatives and functions of the lower courts? The Assembly, it is manifest, is invested with the powers assigned to by the Constitution—no more, no less. By that compact we are all bound. To attempt to supersede it by the dictum that the supreme judiciary, simply because it is supreme, may assume, *de sua propria discretion*, all the powers of the other courts, is to substitute the will of the majority for a well-defined, written charter. Constitutions are made for the protection of the weak against the strong. This theory turns our Constitution into a wall of sand.

This argument from "the nature of Church power" is buttressed by others even more fallacious, derived from the history of the Church of Scotland. A false and dangerous analogy. To what purpose are the passages cited in every quarter from Scotch authors? They prove that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has this right of eminent jurisdiction. Of course it has. It had it from the beginning. It is interwoven with its whole Constitution and history. What is that to us? The Church of Scotland began with a General Assembly, from which its Presbyteries derived their being. Our Church began with a Presbyterial. In process of time the Presbyteries created a General Assembly, and agreed among themselves as to the powers they would reserve to themselves. He would be a bold man who should deny the proposition just laid down, that the Presbyteries can now, at their option, augment or abridge the powers thus assigned to the Assembly. And yet we are referred to the Church of Scotland, and gravely told that our Assembly came into being like Minerva, full armed, that its very birth carried with it all, and more than all the attributes and rights of the constituent churches that created it—the entire power, in fact, inherent in the whole body of our communion. Let us be consistent, then, England has no written Constitution, and needs none; for its Parliament is omnipotent. Let us put our Constitution in the fire.

From the Church of Scotland these brethren turn to the records of our New School controversy. They have shown that eminent men in the Assembly of 1857 maintained the competency of the body to do what was actually done in respect to the New School Synods—widely different case from that presented at St. Louis. But since the prime question before that Assembly was, 'What is the true theory of our Constitution? what powers pertain to the General Assembly?' why do they not quote and expound not particular speeches, but the well-weighted, official deliverance of the entire majority on this fundamental subject? Here it is:—1. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, like that of our National Union, is a Constitution of specific powers granted by the Presbyteries, the fountains of power, to the Synods and the General Assembly. 2. No powers not specifically granted can lawfully be inferred and assumed by the General Assembly, but only such as are indispensably necessary to carry out those specifically granted. (One of the names appended to this paper is that of Samuel C. Anderson, of Virginia. Every one who was present will remember that his great speech on the constitutional question was one of the most powerful and eloquent ever pronounced in the session, and that it did more to decide the wavering minds in the house than any other. It may do to cement the authority of this profound jurist now. In those days he was thought by the Greeks, the Romans, the Willers, and the Elysians of the Church to know something of our Constitution.)

The Vicious Principle in the Theories of Modern Religious Speculation.
In the preface to his 4th volume recently issued by the Carvers, Dr. Merle D'Aubigne suggests the following very pointed hint to the speculative schools of Europe:

"The greatest imaginable absurdity," says one of the eminent philosophers and noble minds of our epoch, M. Jouffroy would be the assertion that this present life is everything, and that there is nothing after it. I know of no greater error in any branch of science." Might there not, however, be another absurdity worthy of being placed by its side? The same philosopher says that, so far as regards our state after this life, 'science and philosophy have not, after two thousand years, arrived at a single accepted result.' Consequently, by the side of the absurdity which M. Jouffroy has pointed out, we confidently place another, as the second of 'the greatest imaginable absurdities,' namely, that which consists in believing, after two thousand years of barren labors, that there is another way besides Christianity to know and possess the life invisible and eternal. The essential fact of the history of religion—and the history of the world: *God manifest in the flesh*, is the ray from heaven which reveals that life to us, and procures it for us. We know what a wind of incredulity has scattered over barren sands many noble souls who aspire to something better, and for whom Christ has opened the gates of eternity; but let us hope that their fall will be only temporary, and that many enlightened men on high, turning their eyes away from the desert which surrounds them, and lifting their heads towards heaven, will exclaim: *I will arise and go to my Father.*

We must, as Jouffroy says, 'recommence our investigations,' but 'first of all,' he adds, we must confess the secret vice which has hitherto rendered all our exertions powerless. That secret vice consists in considering the question in an intellectual and theoretical point of view only, while it is absolutely necessary to grapple with it in a practical way, and to make it an individual fact. The matter under discussion belongs to the domain of humanity, not of philosophy. It does not regard the understanding alone, but the conscience, the will, the heart, and the life. The real vice consists in our not recognizing, within us, the evil that separates us from God, and, without us, the Saviour who leads us to Him. The royal road to learn and possess life invisible and eternal is the knowledge and possession of that Son of Man, of that Son of God, who said with authority: *I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE: NO MAN COMETH UNTO THE FATHER BUT BY ME.*

GERMANY.—Rev. J. V. Moore, D. D., in a letter from the Wartburg to the *Central Presbyterian*, writes: "It is exceedingly difficult to say what the exact religious condition of the German mind now is, for it has so few fixed elements. Nationalism—the perversity of mind that was applied to Scripture to make it teach heresy and invidiousity—has died out greatly, but it is because these men really do not care what Scripture teaches enough to apply this ingenuity to it. Pantheism, which is nothing in many minds but a cold and dreamy mist of materialistic Atheism, is the belief of a sadly large number of educated Germans. It is true that there are a great many earnest evangelists, and the second coming of Christ is the great feature of the gospel that swallows up all others with them."

PRAYER.—Do not say you cannot pray, because you cannot speak many or well, or long. Prayer is wrestling with God; the heart is the wrestler; holy faith is the strength of it. If by the means of this strength, thy heart be a good wrestler, though thou art over so tongue-tied, thou wilt be a prevailor. Theologic goes for little in the heavenly court, but sincere groans have a kind of omnipotence.

D'Aubigne's Estimate of the Origin and Peculiarities of the English Reformation.
In the opening of his 4th volume, D'Aubigne presents the following rather striking view of the influences which combined to bring about and give tone to the Reformation in England:

While France, flattered by Rome calling her its eldest daughter, desired even when reforming her doctrine to preserve union with the papacy; the Anglo-Saxon race, jealous of their liberties, desired to form a Church at once national and independent, yet remaining faithful to the doctrines of Catholicism. Henry VIII. is the personification of that tendency, which did not disappear with him, and of which it would not be difficult to discover traces even in later days.

Other elements calculated to produce a better reformation existed at that time in England. The Holy Scriptures, translated, studied, circulated, and preached since the fourteenth century by Wickliffe and his disciples, became in the sixteenth century, by the publication of Erasmus's Testament, and the translations of Tyndale and Coverdale, the powerful instrument of a real evangelical revival, and created the scriptural reformation.

These early developments did not proceed from Calvin, as he was too young at that time; but Tyndale, Fyfe, and others, and the other evangelists of the reign of Henry VIII., taught by the same Word as the reformer of Geneva, were his brethren and his precursors. Somewhat later, his books and his letters to Edward VI., to the regent, to the prime minister, Sir W. Cecil and others, exercised an indisputable influence over the reformation of England. We find in those letters proofs of the esteem which the most intelligent persons of the kingdom left for that simple and strong man, whom even non-Protestant voices in France have declared to be "the greatest Christian of his age."

A religious reformation may be of two kinds: internal or evangelical, external or legal. The evangelical reformation began at Oxford and Cambridge almost at the same time as in Germany. The legal reformation was making a beginning at Westminster and Whitehall. Students, priests, and laymen moved by inspiration from on high, had inaugurated the first, Henry VIII., and his parliament, were about to inaugurate the second, with hands occasionally somewhat rough. England began with the spiritual reformation, but the other had its motives too. Those who are charmed by the reformation of Germany sometimes affect contempt for that of England. "A king impelled by his passions was its author," they say. We have placed the scriptural part of this great transformation in the first rank; but we confess that for it to lay hold upon the people in the sixteenth century, it was necessary, as the prophet declared, that kings should be its nursing fathers, and queens its nursing mothers. If divers reforms were necessary, if by the side of German cordiality, Swiss simplicity, and other characteristics, God willed to found a protestantism possessing a strong hand and outstretched arm; if a nation was to exist which with great freedom and power should carry the Gospel to the ends of the world, special tools were required to form that robust organization, and the leaders of the people—the commons, lords, and king—were each to play their part. France had nothing like this. Both princes and parliamentarians opposed the reform; and thence partly arises the difference between those two great nations. France had in Calvin a mightier reformer than any of those whom England possessed. But let us not forget that we are speaking of the sixteenth century. Since then the work has advanced; important changes have been wrought in Christendom; political society is growing daily more distinct from religious society, and more independent; and we willingly say with Pascal, "Glorious is the state of the Church when it is supported by God alone!"

Two opposing elements—the reforming liberalism of the people, and the almost absolute power of the king—combined in England to accomplish the legal reformation. In that singular island these two rival forces were often seen acting together: the liberalism of the nation gaining certain victories, the despotism of the prince gaining others; king and people agreeing to make mutual concessions. In the midst of these compromises, the little evangelical flock, which had no voice in such matters, religiously preserved the treasure entrusted to it: the word of God, truth, liberty, and Christian virtue. From all these elements sprang the Church of England. A strange church some call it. Strange indeed, for there is none which corresponds so imperfectly to theory with the ideal of the church; and, perhaps, none whose members work out with more power and grandeur the ends for which Christ has formed his kingdom.

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PUBLISHED EVERY WEEK AT LOUISVILLE, KY.

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ORTHOPEDIES extending over ten (10) lines will be charged at the rate of 10 cts. per line—eight words to the line.

Mr. Joseph V. Morton, of Shelbyville, Ky., has kindly offered his services in behalf of the *Free Christian Commonwealth*, in Shelby Co. and he is hereby authorized to receive for any money paid to him for the paper. He will also receive the names of new subscribers and forward them to the paper. He will also receive orders for Dr. Robinson's new book, "Discourses of Redemption."

Rev. M. W. Ferguson and the *Zanesville* Presbytery.

In a recent issue of our paper we published a short paragraph touching the action of the *Zanesville* Presbytery in regard to the expulsion from the General Assembly of Rev. M. W. Ferguson, for writing a letter to the Ohio Statesman, characterizing as it richly deserved, the outrageous political harangue of Hon. S. Tallaway before the Assembly at St. Louis. This paragraph we clipped from the "Presbyterian Banner" of Pittsburg, which of itself ought to have made us very anxious about publishing it as a true statement of facts. The "Missouri Presbyterian" copied the same item and in the last issue of that paper Bro. Farris makes the following remarks concerning it, which we presume are much nearer the true state of the case. We let it to Mr. Ferguson to publish Bro. Farris's statement.

"A paragraph which found its way into our paper last week, is calculated to produce a false impression concerning this gentleman and the sentiment of the Presbytery in relation to his expulsion from the General Assembly.

The paragraph alluded to was copied from one of our exchanges, and was to the effect that the *Presbytery of Zanesville* had taken up in full synodical session, in view of his expressions of sorrow to the Presbytery and of the punishment he had already suffered, it was thought enough to have been done and the case was dismissed."

We do not know what sort of "regret and sorrow" Mr. Ferguson expressed to his brethren, but we were very sure that said nothing that can be construed into a retraction of the truth set forth in his famous letter. On the contrary, we have good evidence for saying that the *Zanesville* Presbytery, in full synodical session, with Mr. Ferguson and ready to pronounce a strong condemnation of his treatment by the Assembly. We learn that the Presbytery, at a recent *pro rata* meeting, expressed their dissatisfaction at Mr. Ferguson's expulsion, by a vote of twenty to three. We learn also that his church unanimously sustain him, and that his congregations have largely increased.

These evidences of favorable regard are certainly very grateful to Mr. Ferguson, and are but the beginning of that vindication which, in calmer and more Christian times, will clear the doings of that late Assembly from those of which "it is a shame even to speak."

What has led to the Excess of Unemployed Ministers.

Some writer in the *Presbyterian* is indignant that the General Assembly should devote so much time "to Stuart Robinson and his friends" and so little time and consideration to memorials and overtures of Synods on the subject of a substitution fund; and that too in face of the fact that Dr. Lodge has preached and written in favor of the principles of these memorials of Synods, and that there is an alarming increase of unemployed ministers in the Church who by aid of a substitution fund might be employed.

We agree with the writer that the Assembly has occupied itself far too much with Stuart Robinson and his friends. But we are not so clear that its time would have been better employed in inaugurating a substitution fund.

In the first place the excess of unemployed ministers has, in our judgment, grown largely out of the evil of the Church's meddling with political affairs and thereby encouraging political and partisan preaching, just as Stuart Robinson told the Assembly of 1862 it would be. And a fund to tinker up the wreck of that folly, would only fasten permanently the curse upon the Church.

In the second place our experience of the facility with which funds for pious uses can be perverted—witness the case of Danville Seminary and the Board of Domestic Missions—has tended to make us in common with a large number of people somewhat radical in our opposition to this whole system of accumulating funds for future use in the Church. We doubt very much whether in any instance it is wise to make any other provision for either preachers or Theological teachers, beyond what "day by day" the faith and piety of God's people shall lead them to contribute for that purpose. Instead of more funds wherewith to clothe somebody with despotic power over their brethren, it would probably be the highest mercy to the Church if some financial earthquake would sink what we have accumulated, and let the Church return to the simple gospel plan.

State Sunday School Convention.

To the Ministers of the Gospel in the State of Kentucky:

LOUISVILLE, KY., Sept. 18, 1866.

DEAR BRETHREN: The committee of arrangements for the first Sunday school convention for this State, to be held in the city of Louisville, on the 17th, 18th and 19th days of October, 1866, have issued a circular inviting officers, teachers, and friends of Sabbath schools throughout the State to attend. The cooperation of the ministers of the different religious denominations being regarded of so much importance, the last quarterly session of the Louisville and Jefferson county Sunday school convention appointed a committee to address you a circular, and request your prompt and efficient aid in promoting the objects of the proposed convention, and thereby advance the cause of Sabbath schools in our commonwealth.

It is desirable that the preachers be present to take part in the deliberations, but if this is not practicable, let them introduce the subject to their congregations, or to the Sabbath schools under their pastoral care, and secure the attendance of such officers and teachers as will likely take an interest in a meeting of this kind. If this cannot be done, then let a report of the condition of Sunday-school in your locality be furnished, or such a communication as may express your sentiments and sympathies on this subject. We are authorized to say that the committee of arrangements will meet you at the Presbyterian church on the corner of Fourth and Chestnut streets, for the purpose of conducting you to lodgings during the convention. The committee have also made arrangements with the various railroads and packet lines connecting with Louisville, to give *free return tickets* to those who have been in attendance at the convention.

Yours, fraternally,
GEO. C. LOHMEYER,
Pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church.
J. L. McKEE,
Pastor Chestnut St. Presbyterian Church.

THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND.—As many of our friends have written to us desiring information as to where they can procure a good paper for Sabbath-schools, we have inserted a short advertisement of *THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND*, published in Richmond, Va., which will give all the information necessary to enable them to write for it and judge for themselves. We do not hesitate to say that it is by far the best paper for children which comes to our office.

PRESBYTERY OF NASHVILLE.—At the recent meeting of the Presbytery of Nashville, the Rev. H. B. Rouse and ruling elder George Thompson were chosen commissioners to the General Assembly; the Rev. R. P. Bunting and ruling elder D. P. Carter, alternates.

The letter of dismission granted to the Rev. Dr. R. at a previous meeting, was read at Dr. R.'s request, and his name was added to the roll. The narrative of his expulsion from the Assembly, and the large addition to several of his churches, and the fact that he was one hundred and fifty-five, by letter one hundred and twenty-two; the whole matter being reported being 1,520.

"There is on the whole a commendable spirit of liberality." About \$15,000 have been contributed for different church purposes by eight of the churches.

The Rev. Dr. W. K. Handy, formerly of Portsmouth, Va., was recently of Gordonsville, has received a unanimous call to the London Street Church at Winchester. Many of our readers who were his fellow-prisoners at Fort Delaware, will remember Dr. Handy's untiring Christian labors in that prison.

INTERESTING REVIVAL.—Rev. Dr. A. Penick, Sr., writes to the *North-Country* a Presbyterian of a deeply interesting work of grace in the church of which he is pastor, during which one hundred persons attended the inquiry meetings, and of whom found peace in believing. The church is named "Rocky River," and is in Concord Presbytery, in the southwestern part of the State, and has a larger membership than any other church in connection with our General Assembly. The meeting commenced with sacramental services and was continued because the people desired a protracted meeting, and felt their need of prayer. Prayer meetings were held every day, which were attended by nearly the whole congregation, and there were two sermons every morning. "The baptized and catechized youth of Christian praying families were the principal audience, so far as we could observe, of saving divine influences."

Providence directed the steps of the following ministers to the meeting, all of whom went to work, viz: Dr. Nall, of Montreal, and Rev. R. Harding, Dr. A. Penick, Jr., and J. M. Scott.

ANOTHER REVIVAL.—We learn from a correspondent that a season of special religious interest has recently occurred in the Beersheba church, in the Presbytery of Bethel. The services in connection with this occasion were continued for a week and resulted in the addition of about thirty persons to the communion of the church, on a profession of faith. Of these nine were young men. His old and interesting church has been revived and strengthened, and amid all the trials and discouragements of these "evil days" is rejoicing in the light of His countenance whose favor is life, and His loving kindness better than life. —*Southern Presbyterian.*

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.—The Presbytery of Lewis met last week at Dover, Delaware. The only signer of the "Declaration and Testimony" of Rev. Mr. Handy, appeared on the second day of the session, and was admitted to a seat. The Presbytery believing that the injunction did not apply to his case, a paper was at the same time adopted by the Presbytery, expressing their readiness to obey the authority of the General Assembly, and grounding their decision solely on what they believed to be the impolicy of the Assembly's order to the case before them. The whole matter will probably go before the Synod of Baltimore at its next meeting. —*Presbyterian.*

Rev. A. C. Hopkins having accepted a call to the church at Charleston, Jefferson county, West Virginia, has removed to that place. Correspondents will please address him as above instead of Cumberland, C. H. Va.

The Southern General Assembly's Committee of Publication is actively at work. The *General Presbyterian* says that about fifty different issues will soon be completed, of which sixty thousand volumes are already on hand. From the titles given, we suppose they are chiefly Sabbath-school books, a branch of the work to which the energies of the Committee seem for the present to be devoted.

Rev. John D. Matthews, D. D., was installed pastor of the First Church, Lexington, Ky., on September 27, by the Presbytery of West Lexington.

The Rev. H. M. Robertson, of Fond du Lac, Wis., has given notice to his congregation of his intention to ask Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relation between him and the church at Fond du Lac. Mr. Robertson desires to seek a milder climate.

The Rev. P. T. Brown, D. D., of Chicago, has also given a similar notice to his people.

Rev. B. W. Wright, D. D., a member of the Presbytery of Allegheny City, died in Allegheny, Sept. 17th, after a protracted and exhausting illness.

Rev. E. J. Hamilton has received a call from the Presbyterian church, Hamilton, Ohio, whose pulpit he has been supplying for several months past.

The minute book of the Synod of Philadelphia has been lost, either in the boat or the trunk, and the General Assembly, or immediately after. Any one who may know any thing of the book will please communicate with the stated clerk of Synod, Rev. Dr. Andrews, Doylestown, Pa.

PRESBYTERY IN WALES.—It is stated that Calvinistic Methodists in Wales, have assumed the name of "Presbyterians," and as such hold their church courts, Presbyteries, Synods, and Assembly. "They are a powerful and influential body in Wales, and are probably outnumbered by the other denominations, taken as a whole, they embrace within their influence and superintendence a great middle class, distinguished for piety, and worth, and zeal."

NEW ENGLAND EPISCOPACY.—A correspondent of the *N. Y. Observer* says: "Episcopacy is carrying everything before it in Boston, and sweeping into its fold multitudes from the Congregational and Unitarian churches, and some other denominations. But the Episcopacy of New England is of an evangelical and low church type, and its leaders are working vigorously to spread abroad a pure gospel, as well as to build up a denomination."

Mr. J. Anshel Weed, formerly an Episcopal clergyman, and now of Virginia, has become a Roman Catholic, and was lately ordained by Bishop McGill, in Richmond.

The Will of the late Rev. James L. Merriock of Amherst, Mass., is peculiar in some of its provisions. The greater part of the property of the late Mr. Merriock was bequeathed to the establishment of Persian scholarships at Monson Academy, Amherst College, Princeton and Columbia Theological Seminaries. The assistance is to be furnished to those students "who only in themselves the most need of pecuniary aid, the highest grade of talent and literary attainments, with the greatest interest in Oriental knowledge and Mohammedan history, and a true and noble belief and consistent piety."

"D. D."—A correspondent assures the *Christian Intelligence* that one college officer assured a friend of his, that their board, and other officials, had received, this season, about thirty petitions from ministers for the title, "D. D."

BLASPHEMY.—At Mr. Wheeler, at the Presbytery of the Synod of the Convention, said: "Drunkness is just as good as sin. Vice is just as good as virtue. The devil is the equal of God, and hell is just as sweet a place as heaven. Hell itself, if you notice, is high enough, but it is the cold, cold floor of hell." "As Spiritualists," he said, "we have not acknowledged that there is such a thing as moral obligation." And a Mr. Perry said: "As a Spiritualist, I have yet to learn that we hold anything as sacred."

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE.—Some writer gives the following analysis of the "Book of books," the Bible.

"It is the book of Laws, to show the right and wrong. It is the book of Wisdom, that teaches the foolish ways. It is the book of the world, that detects all human errors. It is the book of life, which shows how to avoid everlasting death. It contains the most authentic and entertaining history ever published. It is a perfect mirror of the soul, and a book of Biography. It is a book of Travels. It is a book of Voyages. It is the best covenant ever made—the best ever written. It is the young man's best companion. It is the soldier's best instructor. It is the learned man's dictionary. It promises an eternal reward to the faithful and believing."

MINISTERIAL LABORS.—Several years ago, a Scotch pastor, being asked by a Quaker, "What is the best of your ministerial work?" replied: "In the first place, I write every year what, if printed, would fill two large octavo volumes as large as any man who devotes himself to authorship would think of composing in the same time; secondly, I speak as much every year as a lawyer in good practice speaks at the bar; thirdly, I spend nearly as many hours in making and receiving professional visits as a physician; and fourthly, I am a mercantile man. The merchant answered, 'None of us would do half your work for four times your pay.'"

DEPARTURE OF TRAINS.

Louisville and Nashville Railroad.	
Nashville Passenger Train	7:00 A. M.
Nashville Freight Train	7:30 A. M.
Lexington Train	7:50 A. M.
Louisville and Frankfort and Lexington and Frankfort Railroad.	
Express Train	6:30 A. M.
Accommodation Train	6:45 A. M.
Louisville, New Albany and Chicago Rail.	
Chicago Express	9:30 A. M.
St. Louis Night Express	9:40 P. M.
Cincinnati and St. Louis Railroad.	
St. Louis Express	9:15 P. M.
St. Louis Night Express	9:30 P. M.

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Oct. 1. Secretary of Publication.

General Assembly Record, 1866.

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From the foregoing announcement it will be perceived that the late faculty of the Kentucky School of Medicine have been succeeded by Professors in the Medical Department of the University of Louisville, and that the two Medical Schools of this city are now united. Embodied in this announcement is an understanding that the graduates of the Kentucky School of Medicine shall be entitled to the ad eundem degree of the University, and shall receive the diploma thereof of degree to them, at any regular commencement.

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Bardstown Female Academy.

Free Christian Commonwealth

REVIEWS.

A COMMENTARY ON THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PETER, BY JOHN T. DENNAR, D. D., MINISTER OF THE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH, PASSAIC, N. J. New York, A. Loyal, 115 Nassau St.

We have not yet had time to give this volume though only a thin Octavo, of two hundred and twenty-five beautifully printed pages—that careful examination which such a book deserves before giving an opinion for or against it. Yet we feel free to say that so far as we have examined the book it has impressed us as an important critical disquisition on an important subject. Good commentaries on the Epistles of Peter—especially on 2nd Peter—are somewhat scarce. Dr. Denmar's is in our judgment, done a valuable service for students of the Bible in furnishing them, within so small a compass, so much real learning, so fine a model of critical discussion, and so valuable a help, every way, in getting at the mind of the spirit in this portion of the divine word. Of his second advent views we express no opinion. But whether concurring with these views or not the student of this epistle will find much to thank Dr. Denmar for in his sound, scholarly expositions of the text.

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION IN EUROPE IN THE TIME OF CALVIN. By J. H. MERLE D'ABUIGNE, D. D. Vol. 4th. England, Geneva, France, Germany, and Italy. New York: Robt. Carter & Bros. 1866.

Of this volume, Book 6th, embracing more than one third of the whole, may be considered the continuation of the author's 5th vol. of the "History of the Reformation in the 16th Century," describing the beginning of the Reformation in England. A like portion of the volume is devoted to the events at Geneva in 1535-36. Dr. D'Abuigne's peculiar characteristics as a historian, are too well known to need any criticism from us. We shall in another column extract for our readers an interesting specimen of the author's method in his view of the original causes of the English Reformation; and also his hint in the preface to the profound philosophers in search of a religion. The book is for sale by Mr. Davidson, on Third st.

HEAVEN OPENED.—A selection from the Correspondence of Mrs. Mary Winslow, Edited by her Son, Robt. Carter & Bros., 530 Broadway, New York.

We have received, and partially read this beautiful volume—gotten up in the best style of Ballantyne & Co., Edinburgh. And the book is well worthy the honor of publication in such a style. Since the *Cardiphonia*, the Letters of Rutherford and the Diaries of Brainerd and Henry Martyn, we have met with nothing inspired, so beautifully spiritual as this collection of excerpts from the letters of this very remarkable woman. They relate to almost every conceivable phase of the Christian daily life; and no spiritual-minded person can read them without wonder at the extent of her success in opening Heaven on earth. We should greatly rejoice to find this sort of reading becoming popular among Christian people again as it was in our boyhood. Especially would we recommend this book to Christian ladies as a model of the beautiful in the Christian daily life.

Mr. Davidson has the book for sale.

THE GOLDEN LADDER SERIES.—In six volumes, illustrated. By the author of "Little Katy and Jolly Jim." A. New York, Robt. Carter & Bros.

This set of juvenile books gotten up in such attractive style, indicates that the Holidays are again approaching; and that the Messrs. Carters are determined to keep up if not outstrip their neighbors in the publication of attractive books for the young.

These six volumes are all designed to teach an important lesson on prayer as set forth in the six parts of the Lord's prayer. The story in each of the books is interesting and just the kind of a Christmas present that a boy or girl would like to have. Mr. Davidson has them for sale at his bookstore on Third street.

"THE OMNIPOTENCE OF LOVING-KINDNESS" being a narrative of a Lady's seven months work among the fallen in Glasgow. 16mo, pp. 310. New York, Robt. Carter & Bros.

This volume is what its title states—a narrative of the faithful efforts of a Christian lady in Glasgow to reclaim the fallen women in that city; and the result of her efforts, especially with those who had been seduced into such a course of life by the wiles, falsehood and treachery of those utterly abandoned was truly wonderful. In many instances, so recorded, did this lady meet with a rich reward for all her labors, in beholding a thorough and radical change of heart, wrought by the Spirit of God, causing these rescued ones to praise God for his great mercy toward them in snatching them as brands from the everlasting burning.

The narrative is a beautiful illustration of the glorious provisions of the blessed gospel.—"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; and though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." The motto of the book is an expression of the great Dr. Chalmers, and it is a true motto. It was beautifully exemplified by Him who went about doing good, and has always a charm, a power about it which even the most hardened in sin can scarcely resist. We honor the lady who has the moral heroism to go into those dens of iniquity upon such an errand of love and compassion to the fallen and degraded of her sex. The book is for sale by Mr. Davidson, 55 Third-street near Market.

PEACE WITH GOD. By Rev. Wm. Adams, D. D. New York, Robt. Carter & Bros.

This is a sermon on Romans V. 1, by the pastor of one of the Presbyterian

Churches in New York city in connection with the New School. It is an evangelical discourse.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE for September has been laid upon our table. Its contents are as follows: viz Sir Brook Brooke Part XVI Westminster School-Conclusion; English Converts to Romanism; Nina Falatka the story of a maiden of Prague—Part III. The Great Woods in Winter. The Great Unrepresented Cornish O'Dowd—continued. The Legacy of the Late Government.

Address, the Leonard Scott Publishing Company, 28 Walker-street, New York.

Mental and Moral Epidemics.—The Jerks. The singular phrensy of "loyalty" which has seized upon our "Protestant" churches during the last five years has doubtless puzzled many a sober thinker. To find men, whom we always supposed to be good Christian men, filled with the spirit of blood-thirst, as if seized upon by some demon, as in the "possession" we read of in the New Testament, is to us one of the most curious puzzles in the science of human nature. Nor can we account for it except upon the theory that it is one of those epidemics which so frequently in the history of Christianity have seized upon the Church during an era of excitement.

Readers of religious biographies will recall the marvelous religious epidemics which have sometimes run their course under the revival preachings of Whitfield and Wesley, the Tennents and Blairs: at the Cambuslang and Kilsyth revivals in Scotland. These cases show that even a pure religion is subject to such singular epidemics. The cases of the Witchcraft epidemic, and the Crusading epidemic that spread over all Europe illustrate their connection with ignorance and false religion.

The revival in Kentucky and Tennessee sixty years ago, furnish perhaps the most remarkable illustration on record of the excesses to which these curious movements of the human mind may reach. In an old number of the Repository we find an account of some of these phenomena, by an intelligent minister who witnessed them. Our readers will no doubt be gratified to have an extract from this account. Says the writer:

"I proved to relate a case or two, respecting the exercise called the jerks. This succeeded sometime after the falling exercise, and I believe, had its origin in East Tennessee, at least it was, to use a commercial phrase, first imported into Kentucky. It was a novelty, and excited the curiosity of the aged and the young. It was entirely involuntary, drowsed and hated, and even caused by some while it was desired, and courted, and highly prized by others. It came on something like the *hiccough*, without any premonitory symptom, and left the subject equally without any sensible effect. During its prevalence, I made several experiments: being a young minister, and inexperienced, I knew not what to do with it. While preaching, I have, after a smooth and gentle course of expression, suddenly changed my voice, and language, expressing something awful and alarming, and, instantly, some dozen or twenty persons, or more, would simultaneously be jerked forward, where they were sitting, with a suppressed groan, or once or twice somewhat like the hiccough, and then would either continue or abate according to the tone, or strain of my discourse. The strong sympathy, and intimate correspondence between the mind and body, was fully manifested. By this experiment, producing the exhibition which immediately followed. The first subject of this exercise that attracted my attention, was the widow wife of one of our elders. She was afflicted by this operation very gently, she felt no pain whatever, but rather the reverse—a pleasing sensation—could give no satisfactory account of its operation. She went to the country village on a public day, to do a little shopping. I accompanied her on our way home. She was entirely free from any operation of the jerks. I determined in my own mind to try an experiment, conversed freely and somewhat facetiously with her on secular matters, to divert her mind as far as I could in that direction as I thought necessary, and then immediately changed the subject to that of a very serious and solemn character. I am certain, not two minutes had elapsed before she was completely affected with this exercise. Her body, from the saddle and upwards, appeared to pitch forward half way to the horse's neck, six or eight times in a minute. I was fully satisfied she could not prevent it. My mind became, some time after, greatly perplexed about this exercise. I could not encourage it, and yet, being a young minister, I was afraid to say anything against it, publicly, as it had many friends and advocates. At length it was found to be detrimental in various ways. Besides the unbecoming public worship, it deterred many from attending altogether, and being impressed with the belief that it was 'catching.' But it was not confined to the public assembly; it invaded the private and domestic circle, while engaged in domestic business, or travelling on the road. The same individual was frequently the subject of it, young and old, male and female, refined and unrefined, the pious and the wicked, were alike under its operations.

Take another singular case, stated to me by Mr. McGready. A young man, son of an elder, was attending a camp meeting in the neighborhood with the family feigned himself sick. On the morning of the Sabbath, he continued in bed, until the family had all started for the meeting, he being left alone, except a few small blacks. When this alone, he congratulated himself on his success, by the deception he had practised on his parents. He raised up his head, and looking all around his room, smiled at the adventure, but lest it might not be complete, lest some one might have occasion to linger, or return, and so be detected, he resumed his clinical position, covering over his head, and in a short time directed his thoughts towards the camp ground. He fancied the multitude assembling, the services commencing, the bodily exercises, as he had seen them, now in operation. He fancied a certain female now in full exercise: "how she sits at, now she's at, in a moment he was taken with the same exercise, the jerks, was hurled out of his bed, and jerked hither and thither, all around the room, against the wall, and in every fashion. He had never been affected by bodily exercise before, but now

found himself perfectly unmanageable. He had heard it said, and indeed witnessed the fact that *praying* would cause a jerk to occur. He tried it, and the desired effect followed immediately. He felt no more the effects of the exercise than a person does after the hiccough. He supposed it all a dream, a mere conceit, illusion, or something of the kind, resumed his bed, commenced his prayers again, and again the exercise acted over, only a little worse. The same remedy was resorted to, and he again became in *status quo*. He arose, dressed himself, sauntered about awhile, wanted some employment to pass the time away, he thought himself of a *dry skin* in the vat, that needed *unhairing*, he drew it out, laid it on the beam, rolled up his sleeves, grasped the graining knife, lifted it up to make the first scrape, when lo, it was instantaneously jerked out of his grasp, and he was jerked back, over his head, against the beam, and down, until he resorted to his old remedy and again obtained relief. Feelings before, perfectly free from any sensible or evil effects, as strong and resolute, and determined, and reckless as ever, he ventured again, and assumed his instrument, and resumed his posture over the subject of his intended operation, when immediately, before he could make one stroke, the whole scene, only, if possible, tenfold worse, was acted over again. It was much more severe, and greatly protracted. The usual remedy, at first failed, he became alarmed, thought the Lord was now about to kill him, he became deeply convicted of his great folly and wickedness, became composed again in body, but now greatly agitated and concerned in mind. He called a young woman, pointed him to the dog skin, which he was afraid now to approach, directed where to lay it away, returned to his room weeping and crying to God for mercy, and in this condition was found on the return of the family. He shortly afterward obtained a good hope through grace, and was a member of the church, gave a relation of facts to the session, was received, and in the judgment of Christian charity, gave satisfactory evidence by a scriptural experience, and godly living, that he was a renewed man, and redeemed sinner—saved by grace.

I will trouble you with only one case more. One evening I rode six miles up Green river, and preached at a Mr. M. Whorter's in a Baptist settlement. The house was crowded. The people were attentive, until I had finished my discourse and had prayed, and was about to sing the last hymn, but was forestalled by an enthusiastic kind of man, who started a song with a lively tune. Several young women began to jerk backwards and forwards. The seats were immediately removed, to afford room and prevent them from being hurt. I was hastily glad that I would call the *whirling exercise*. She went round like a top, I think at least fifty times a minute, and continued, without intermission, for at least an hour. It exceeded by far, anything of the kind I had ever witnessed. I was told she had this *jerky* nearly every year. She did not appear exhausted, complained of pain or distress if the bystanders did not continue singing. I became perfectly tired, my preaching seemed to be all gone, and to have been rather in the way, from what took place afterwards. I afterwards went with some of them, and cautioned them. Thus you see this exercise continued, more or less, in one or another place for a long time. It, however, in the general, gradually disappeared, especially from the Presbyterian church, and thus allowed another shock. In her vision and experience, I believe such things will never find favor and encouragement again.

For the Free Christian Commonwealth.

There has been much talk about the religious obligation to obey all the commands of "the powers that be," in the Church and in the State.

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church enjoins obedience to all the *lawful* commands of both, but there is not one word enjoining obedience to the *unlawful* commands of either. The men who framed and adopted that confession, did not believe the doctrine of passive obedience. The members of the Westminster Assembly, all the time they were framing the confession, were in open rebellion against their long established government; and the men in this country a few years before they adopted that confession, were in open rebellion against their established government. Dr. Witherspoon, one of them, had signed his name to the Declaration of Independence. The Westminster Confession of Faith—the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and the Constitution of the United States were all of them formed by rebels. But they were successful rebels, and were honored and praised. Had they been unsuccessful, they would have been condemned and abused.

Fetitious Literature—Its enfeebling influence on the mind.

This is a subject of great practical importance, and demands the most serious attention; for there is a wide-spread disposition among many who belong to Christian families and churches to devote a large portion of their time to the reading of fictitious works. I do not mean those corrupt and debasing novels in which vice is presented in attractive features, and which tend so powerfully to influence the passions, and corrupt the moral tastes and habits; for these must be condemned by every right minded individual, and excluded from every Christian circle. But I refer to works of a less objectionable character, and which are generally regarded as harmless. That they are interesting to a certain class of readers, and present some amusing, though often distorted, views of life as it exists among persons of little social refinement and destitute of cultivated piety, is admitted. Nevertheless, they are to a great extent destitute of solid thought and instruction, of all right views of truth and duty, and all reference to the wants and interests of the soul. And, what is still worse, they frequently present unscriptural views of sin; excuse vice as a misfortune, tolerate in some cases its commis-

sion, and hold up as fanatical a life of devoted piety.

To devote time and attention to such books must be variously injurious. But at present I will speak only of its *enfeebling influence on the mind*. All will readily admit, that should a man devote himself continuously to the reading of physical pleasure, without exerting his energies, he would become incapable of much exertion, and unable to endure much fatigue. He may have the stature of the man, but he certainly would not have manly strength and vigor. The bones and muscles would lack that firmness and power, which spring alone from exercise and toil.

Precisely similar is the influence on the mind of devotion to those fictitious books. It is constantly enfeebling and deteriorating. 'It cannot,' says a distinguished writer, 'but be injurious to the human mind, never to be called in to effort. The habit of receiving pleasure without any exertion of thought, by the mere excitement of curiosity and sensibility, may be justly ranked among the worst effects of habitual novel reading. Like idle morning visitors, the brisk and breathless periods hurry in and hurry off in quick and profitless succession; each, indeed, for the moment of its stay, prevents the pain of vacancy, while it indulges the love of sloth; but afterwards they leave the mistress of the house—the soul I mean—flat and exhausted, incapable of attending to her own concerns, and unfitted for the conversation of more rational guests.'

The late Dr. Arnold of Rugby, than whom no man was better fitted to judge, said, 'Childishness in boys of good abilities comes to me to be a growing fault; and I do not know to what to ascribe it, except to the great number of exciting books of amusement, like *Pickwick* and *Nickelby*, &c. &c. These completely satisfy all the intellectual appetite of a boy, which is rarely very voracious, and leave him totally palsied, not only for his regular work, but for all good literature of all sorts, even for history and poetry.'

This habit is one of the alarming features of our day. And we would counsel parents to exercise the utmost watchfulness for their children, and to exhibit to them in this particular a consistent example, lest they should become enervated to this pernicious habit of making these publications their only mental food. The habit is to the mind what indulgence in intoxicating drink is to the body. In both cases there is a constant craving for excitement, and for an excitement which unfits the faculties, and draws away the affections from duty, from heaven, and from God.

The late Isaac Taylor, speaking to parents said, "and his words are full of practical wisdom. 'I am intending to onslaught on novel reading. I have no Puritanic horror of novels. I have listened to most of those that were the popular fictions of bygone time. I would say this only to the heads of families: Make your choice; freely admit from the circulating library the three-volume novels of the season, and then be content to read that residue of zest is gone as to history, to biography, science, and everything else that is real and genuine, Christianity included.'

'Novel reading is an infatuation which masters souls as surely as drinking does. Many are the melancholy spectacles which one encounters in towns; as, for instance, a woman, wasted, worn, in tatters, and near starvation: this is a sad sight. And so it is a sad sight to meet the well-dressed lady of forty or fifty, hastening home with three greasy volumes which are all to be devoured between the noon of to-day and the dawn of to-morrow.'

The alternative for the individual and the family is this: novel reading, with the consequent *manly* and utter apathy; or else genuine feeling, employment, with zest as to whatever is real in life, in history, in science, in poetry, and general literature. Fiction of any sort in one scale, and reality in the other—the beam will never stand on the level.—[*Christian Treasury*.]

For the Children.

[From the Children's Friend.]

Patty's Talk with Papa.

"Do look, papa, what is the meaning of this horrible picture? See those poor children sleeping so sweetly in their bed, and those three dreadful looking men, one with a torch, and two holding a feather bed over them. Oh! I see, underneath it says: 'The murder of the princes in the Tower.' What princes and what tower, papa?"

"The famous Tower of London—the great prison of England, where so many kings and queens, and other great people, of that country, have suffered and died. It was founded eight hundred years ago, by William the Conqueror. Those poor boys were the children of Edward IV., and were sent there by their uncle the Duke of Gloucester, because he intended to seize the crown for himself. He hired a miserable creature named Sir James Tyrrel to put them to death, who went at midnight with these three men, Slater, Deighton and Forest, and while he stood at the door, they went in and smothered the poor children, then took their bodies and buried them at the foot of the stairs, deep in the ground under the stones. The Duke then caused himself to be proclaimed king under the title of Richard III."

"Oh! what a horribly wicked king he was, and I am so sorry for the poor little boys."

"Yes, Richard was a very wicked man indeed. He had many other persons murdered beside his two innocent nephews, for he determined to be king though he had to commit dreadful crimes to gain his end. But God did not suffer this monster to reign long; after two unquiet years, he was slain in a battle fought near Bosworth field. Thus he was soon called to render up his account to the great King of heaven and earth. His body did not even rest in peace: for in the reign of Henry VIII., the stone coffin in which he was buried, was used as a horse-trough at the White Horse Inn."

"Child, I will take Thy Hand."

A Reply to "Father, take my hand."

The way is dark, my child! but leads to light. I would not always have thee walk by sight: My destiny thou cannot not understand. I meant it so: but I will take thy hand, And through the gloom Lead safely home.

My child!

The path is rough, my child! but oh! how sweet Will be the rest, for weary pilgrims meet, When thou shalt reach the borders of that land To which I lead thee, as I take thy hand: And safe and blest With me shall rest My child!

My child!

The cross is heavy, child! Yet there is One Who bore a heavier for thee: My Son, My Well-beloved. For Him bear thine; and stand With Him at last; and from Thy Father's hand, Thy cross laid down, My child! H. N. C.

The Chicago Theological Seminary (Congregational) has opened with about forty students. It is expected that the number will be increased to fifty. The Professors are Drs. Haven, Bartlett and Fisk.

"Papa, I used to think I would like to be a queen or a great person; but so many of them were put to death, and so many were very wicked, that I am glad I am not one."

"The great secret of happiness, my dear, is in being satisfied in the condition in which God has placed us, and in trying to do our duty both to God and man. And remember God will keep those who depend on Him from committing these dreadful crimes, whether they are kings or beggars. Moses, one of the greatest men that ever lived, loved and served God, and how different he was from King Richard III."

"Yes, indeed, papa, you know he might have been king of Egypt, and he would not have had to commit crimes, as Richard did, either; but the Bible says, he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." I suppose, as they were heathen people, he knew he could not serve God if he was their king."

"Yes, and he was looking forward to an inheritance in a much greater kingdom even than Egypt with all its splendors; and we can scarcely in our day, conceive of the grandeur and magnificence of Egypt, in the time of Moses. Such immense buildings of marble—whole cities of stately palaces and magnificent temples. Such profusions of carvings, sculpture, and paintings, and gold, precious stones, and gorgeous dresses. Such enchanting pleasure-grounds, with their trees, flowers, and statues; and vast artificial lakes, with beautiful galleys and pleasure boats; and such vast and powerful navies and armies. Then too, Moses was a learned man, and he gave up the society of the wise men of Egypt; but instead of them he talked with God, and He instructed him, and foretold him what would come to pass. As King of Egypt he would have been forever a long ago; but now, when ever the Bible is read, he is known as the great leader and law-giver of Israel, and the friend of God. You see Moses did not lose anything by his choice. God has said, 'them that honour me, I will honour,' and Moses has been honoured even to heaven."

"How so, papa, do we know about Moses now?"

"When our Saviour was transfigured on Mount Tabor, Moses and Elias were sent to commune with Him; and the greatest honour that can be conferred on any one, is to be sent ambassador from one court to another."

"What is an ambassador, papa?"

"An ambassador, is one employed by a prince or State, at the court of another, to carry important messages or manage important affairs."

"Thank you for telling me all this, papa. When I look at my picture, and think how wicked Richard was, I will think of Moses too, and remember that he tried to please God, while Richard only tried to please himself."

"And do not fail, dear child, to ask God to help you too, to choose His way, before your own. Remember, we can do nothing good of ourselves, but we can do all things with God's help."

AMICA.

BE YE ALSO READY.—A boy lay on his sick bed, weak and pale from a severe sickness. He had early loved the Saviour, and though there was much to make life pleasant—loving parents and a beautiful home—he was willing to die.

"You are going to heaven, my dear boy," said the minister, something his wayward. "You are now in the dark valley, but Christ is with you. I am with you, always, even unto the end."

"I know it, I know it," answered the child; "I am with you, always, but say the mother. 'What other my darling?'"

asked his mother. Jamie's breath grew shorter; but at last he said, turning his eyes full upon his father, who was not a Christian, "Be ye also ready." Oh, God, may my father never be able to forget, 'Be ye also ready.' "My darling Jamie," said his father, throwing his arms around him, "you must not die." "Be ye also ready," again came from the cold lips pressed against his cheek. It was the last effort of that little life. Jamie had finished his business, his heavenly Father had given him to do below, and his spirit went up to its higher service, to engage with the holy angels in glorifying Him forever in heaven. And that father was not able to forget the last message of his departed boy, but at once sought the Saviour, that he might be "also ready" to join him in the new Jerusalem.

"Child, I will take Thy Hand."

A Reply to "Father, take my hand."

The way is dark, my child! but leads to light. I would not always have thee walk by sight: My destiny thou cannot not understand. I meant it so: but I will take thy hand, And through the gloom Lead safely home.

My child!

Thou day goes fast, my child! but is the night Darker to me than day? In me is light: Keep close to me, and every spectral band Of fears shall vanish. I will take thy hand, And through the night Lead up to light.

My child!

The way is long, my child! but it shall be Not one step longer than is best for thee, And thou shalt know it, when thou shalt stand Safe at the goal, how I did take thy hand, And quick and straight Led to heaven's gate.

My child!

The path is rough, my child! but oh! how sweet Will be the rest, for weary pilgrims meet, When thou shalt reach the borders of that land To which I lead thee, as I take thy hand: And safe and blest With me shall rest My child!

My child!

The cross is heavy, child! Yet there is One Who bore a heavier for thee: My Son, My Well-beloved. For Him bear thine; and stand With Him at last; and from Thy Father's hand, Thy cross laid down, My child! H. N. C.

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